



City of Darwin Media Release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

80th anniversary of Bombing of Darwin Commemoration to be live-streamed to the nation

This Saturday, a Day of National Observance, Australia can join via live-stream to remember the day exactly 80 years ago when World War II forced itself onto Australia's mainland for the first time.

The Darwin community will gather to pay their respects to the men and women who fought during the Darwin air raids and the community who survived, at the annual Bombing of Darwin Day Commemoration Service.

For the first time, the City of Darwin will live-stream the commemoration service to allow Australia as a nation, to join their city in acknowledging the 80th Anniversary.

Darwin Lord Mayor Kon Vatskalis, says "We are commemorating the 80th anniversary of an event of national significance. It is a part of our history all Australians should be aware of."

Just before 10am, on 19 February 1942, a formation of 188 Japanese aircraft mounted a deadly air raid on Darwin and the sound of whistling bombs rang in the ears of allied troops and civilians.

Life for people in Darwin would never be the same. They had suffered the largest single attack ever on Australian soil and its impact is still felt 80 years later.

Allied aircraft mounted a counterattack and anti-aircraft gunners fought to protect the city and harbour, but by the day's end at least 235 people were killed, more than 400 were wounded, 30 aircraft were destroyed, 11 ships were sunk, and many civilian and military facilities were damaged.

One of the last surviving veterans, who was in Darwin during the bombing will attend the service.

101 year old Brian Winspear vividly recalls the first bombing of Darwin in which he received shell splinters in his hand and eye.

"We were in a trench, about fifty yards from the aerodrome and you could see the Japanese in their cockpits.

"I looked up and the sun glinted on the bombs as they were falling, and it was just like confetti."

Descendants of the Darwin Larrakia people will be in attendance to acknowledge how Indigenous and non-Indigenous worked side-by-side to contribute to the war effort.

“It was devastating for the local Aboriginal community. We remember together and embrace reconciliation by sharing stories and acknowledging what happened”, says Larrakia elder Christine Fejo-King.

Other descendants of the fallen, military, civilian survivors and evacuees will also attend the service at the Darwin Cenotaph, 9.30am to 11am ASCT (11am to 12.30pm AEST).

More information about the bombing of Darwin, and the link to the live-stream is available at www.darwin.nt.gov.au/BODD

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